



United States Attorney's Office
District of Columbia

Channing D. Phillips
Acting United States Attorney

PRESS RELEASE

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James Von Brunn Indicted for Murder of Special Police Officer Stephen Johns and Hate Crimes Charges for Attack on the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum

WASHINGTON -A federal grand jury in the District of Columbia has returned a seven-count indictment charging James Wenneker Von Brunn, 89, of Annapolis, Maryland, with the murder of Special Police Officer Stephen Tyrone Johns and related hate crime and gun charges for his alleged attack on the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum on June 10, 2009. Acting U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia Channing Phillips, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division Loretta King, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office Joseph Persichini, Jr., and Metropolitan Police Department Chief Cathy L. Lanier announced the indictment today.

The indictment stems from the defendant's alleged attack on the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum on June 10, 2009, resulting in the shooting death of Special Police Officer Stephen Tyrone Johns. The indictment also charges Von Brunn with federal civil rights and hate crimes violations and District of Columbia Code offenses under the District's murder, firearms and hate-crimes statutes for his alleged attack on the individuals inside the museum at the time of the shooting.

In announcing the indictment, Acting U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia Channing Phillips, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division Loretta King, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office Joseph Persichini, Jr., and Metropolitan Police Department Chief Cathy L. Lanier commended the excellent investigative work of the FBI agents and MPD detectives assigned to the case. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Nicole Waid and Vinet Bryant and Trial Attorney Ed Chung of the DOJ Civil Rights Division. Trial Attorney Bill Narus of the DOJ Counterterrorism Section provided substantial assistance in the investigation of this case.

If convicted, the defendant faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. Four of the counts in the indictment also are death penalty eligible.

The charges contained in the indictment are merely allegations. The defendant is presumed innocent until and unless found guilty in a court of law.

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